

between the Palestinian defenders and the Amal gangs, supported by the Lebanese Army 6th Brigade. Amal attempted to advance several times, but was faced with fierce resistance, forcing it to back down, having suffered many casualties. Amal also shelled nearby Ain Al Hilweh camp, causing the death and wounding of many civilians and much destruction. On December 4th, in a clear projection of military as well as political cooperation with Amal, Zionist warships shelled Palestinian positions in Maghdousheh, aiming to ease the pressure on Amal and the army.

The Iranian initiative aimed at ending the war was put forward on December 4th. On December 7th, the Palestinian forces agreed to a full ceasefire to start that night. As usual, Amal rejected the agreement, as was seen in intensified aggression against Shatila and Burj Al Barajneh. Thus, the ceasefire did not take effect immediately. Despite the Palestinian fighters' adherence to this agreement, Amal continued attacking their positions, but without success. However, the fighting did ease off by December 10th, and the situation was quiet thereafter. The majority of Palestinian forces withdrew from their posts in Maghdousheh in accordance with the agreement, but Arafat's fighters did not.

RASHIDIYA

Rashidiya camp has been living under siege since the first of October, experiencing the worst conditions, ranging from food shortages to daily sniping and shelling, and the impossibility of getting the wounded out of the camp for treatment. On December 1st, Amal burned down most of the small, nearby camp, Al Bass, after having looted the contents of the houses, in a continuation of executing its dirty plan for expelling Palestinians from the Tyre area, in preparation for building a Shiite canton in the South.

The agreement reached on December 7th did not in Amal's interpretation mean an immediate lifting of the siege. On December 10th, food supplies were not admitted into the camp. Only two trucks carrying rotten potatoes and onions were let in, and these were sent back by the popular committee. The wounded could not be evacuated. With the entrance into the camp of the Iranian delegation and some Lebanese clergymen, shelling and sniping eased, though it did not stop. Amal asked these delegates to leave the camp. When they refused, Amal escalated the shelling and sniping.

On December 12th, Amal did start executing the first clauses of the agreement reached through Iranian and Libyan efforts, concerning evacuating some of the wounded from Rashidiya and allowing food supply trucks to enter the camp. It was following this that the Palestinian forces (except Arafat's) withdrew from Maghdousheh.

WEST BEIRUT

Not only the Palestinians living in the camps of Tyre, Sidon and Beirut were targeted. Palestinians living outside the camps were also a favorite prey for Amal's gangs. Palestinians living in West Beirut have been indiscriminately killed, kidnapped, humiliated and tortured. Amal stationed barricades on the streets, looking for someone, anyone, whose identity card identified him/her as a Palestinian. Homes of Palestinians were looted. Amal conducted house-to-house searches for Palestinians. Many Palestinians, young, old, men and women, were killed on the spot. Barbarism, it seemed, had no limits.

On December 3rd, a whole family of Palestinians was killed. Their bodies were mutilated and thrown into the streets of West Beirut, near the Kuwaiti embassy. On December 4th, at half past seven in the evening, the Amal gangs committed a massacre Sharon would have been proud of. They stormed a house in the Shweifat area, and attacked all those present. Six were killed and three injured, all women and children.

Road blocks, looting, kidnapping and arbitrary arrests and detentions continued in West Beirut, and began to affect Lebanese nationalists as well as Palestinians. In a report from West Beirut, it was estimated that 90% of houses belonging to Palestinians had been looted, while the remaining 10% had been confiscated. All Palestinians 14 years of age and older were especially targeted. The number of Palestinians in detention is unknown. However, Amal did tend to ease the pace of setting up road blocks, after several attacks were launched at its centers and barricades. Still, this did not totally deter the Amal gangs; raids and arrests continued.

On December 18th, Amal thugs committed yet another crime. This time it was not random killing; it was deliberate. The target was a Palestinian woman whose name is known to most poor Palestinians and Lebanese. Her name was Nabila Breir. She was a UNICEF official, who had dedicated her work to humanitarian aid for the needy. In particular, she had worked

with the provision of aid to children displaced by the recurring wars. Nabila was dragged out of a car by four thugs and murdered on the spot. The same day, Amal members fired at the entrance of Mar Elias camp, attempting to spread the war into one more camp. One resident of Mar Elias was killed and three wounded. Then, on December 21st, gunmen in a car shot at an army barracks near Mar Elias, provoking the soldiers to direct their fire at the camp. The dangerous situation in West Beirut continues...

STOP PRESS

On December 31st, Amal gangs escalated the military situation, breaking the ceasefire. They attempted to infiltrate into the camp, but were faced with fierce resistance which caused many casualties in their ranks. As a result, they began a heavy barrage of rockets (two per minute) and machine gun fire against the camp. In the morning of the same day, a group of children and youth were picking oranges, when Amal thugs captured two of the youth, Jihad Sabri and Mahmoud Karimy, both PFLP members, and barbarically killed them.

Amal's New Year's eve 'party' included a variety of activities. Shatila was one of the targets, and Nabih Berri's ceasefire pledge was forcibly implemented by heavy shelling; mortars and rockets rained down on the camp at the rate of 25 shells per minute. Burj Al Barajneh received the same 'gifts' from Amal.

Military forces from all sides went on alert in West Beirut following reports that a large battle would soon erupt. Taking advantage of this situation, Amal set up scores of new roadblocks for checking the identification of passers-by. Amal also raided several houses in the Fakhani/Tariq Al Jadida area. On January 2nd, Amal issued a warning to the residents of the Daouq and Sports City stadium area, adjacent to Shatila camp, to evacuate their houses; otherwise their houses would be destroyed with them inside.

PFLP Politbureau Statement on the Camp War

The PFLP's Politbureau convened on January 4, 1987, to discuss the latest political and military developments relevant to the third war being waged against our people's camps, by Amal, with the aid of the Lebanese Army's 6th and 1st brigades. The Politbureau discussed the factors that have prolonged this war and the suffering inflicted on our masses... and the insistence of Amal on continuing to execute its project, aimed at disarming

the Palestinian camps and expelling the population, as a prelude towards creating a canton in the South, subject to US-Israeli conditions... The insistence of Amal and the backers of its suicidal project was manifest in various forms, mainly:

1. Amal's rejection and delay of the initiatives and solutions put forth by friendly forces to stop the bloodshed, bring (the parties involved) to the negotiating table... and put a final end